

# The Washington Times

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MONDAY, JUNE 23, 1919.

## Here Is "Fine Writing"

Don't Copy It, But ABSORB It.

The tree that you see growing in the woods is growing out of other trees, disappeared beneath the ground. The literary genius of one age rises from writers that have gone before.

The most powerful thought of Milton you will find in Dante, and Dante's whole idea of a trip to hell, including the savage beast that he met "in the middle of the road of life," you will all find in the writing of an early monk.

A man writes well because he has ABSORBED, not COPIED, the good writings of others.

Here follows a sample of "fine writing." It is taken from Volney's admirable book, "Ruins of Empires."

The traveler in an Eastern land, supposed to be Volney himself, visits the scenes of ancient splendor, fallen in ruins, the temple in which the lioness makes her den, and moralizes.

Let the young boy or girl in your house read this out loud, endeavoring to give full meaning to the beautiful words, and to understand and appreciate them. And do the same yourself.

After a walk of three-quarters of an hour along these ruins I entered the inclosure of a vast edifice, formerly a temple dedicated to the Sun; and accepting the hospitality of some poor Arabian peasants, who had built their hovels on the area of the temple, I determined to devote some days to contemplate at leisure the beauty of these stupendous ruins.

Daily I visited the monuments which covered the plain; and one evening, absorbed in reflection, I had advanced to the Valley of Sepulchres. I ascended the heights which surround it from whence the eye commands the whole group of ruins and the immensity of the desert.

The sun had sunk below the horizon; a red border of light still marked his track behind the distant mountains of Syria; the full-orbed moon was rising in the east, on a blue ground, over the plains of the Euphrates; the sky was clear, the air calm and serene; the dying lamp of day still softened the horrors of approaching darkness; the refreshing night breezes attempted the sultry emanations from the heated earth; the herdsman had given their camels to repose, the eye perceived no motion on the dusky and uniform plain; profound silence rested on the desert; the howlings only of the jackal, and the solemn notes of the bird of night, were heard at distant intervals.

Darkness now increased, and through the dusk could only be discerned the pale phantoms of columns and walls. The solitude of the place, the tranquillity of the hour, the majesty of the scene, impressed on my mind a religious pensiveness. The aspect of a great city deserted, the memory of times past, compared with its present state, all elevated my mind to high contemplations. I sat on the shaft of a column, my elbow resting on my knee, and head reclining on my hand, my eyes fixed, sometimes on the desert, sometimes on the ruins, and fell into a profound reverie.

### THE REVERIE.

Here, said I, once flourished an opulent city; here was the seat of a powerful empire. Yes! these places, now so wild and desolate, were once animated by a living multitude; a busy crowd thronged in these streets, now so solitary. Within these walls, where now reigns the silence of death, the noise of the arts and the shouts of joy and festivity incessantly resounded; these piles of marble were regular palaces; these fallen columns adorned the majesty of temples; these ruined galleries surrounded public places. Here assembled a numerous people for the sacred duties of their religion, and the anxious cares of their subsistence; here industry, parent of enjoyments, collected the riches of all climes, and the purple of Tyre was exchanged for the precious thread of Serica; the soft tissues of Cassimere for the sumptuous tapestry of Lydia; the amber of the Baltic for the pearls and perfumes of Arabia; the gold of Ophir for the tin of Thule.

And now behold what remains of this powerful city: a miserable skeleton! What of its vast domination; a doubtful and obscure remembrance! To the noisy concourse which thronged under these porticos, succeeds the solitude of death. The silence of the grave is substituted for the busy hum of public places; the affluence of a commercial city is changed into wretched poverty; the palaces of kings have become a den of wild beasts; flocks repose in the area of temples, and savage reptiles inhabit the sanctuary of the gods. Ah! how has so much glory been eclipsed? How have so many labors been annihilated? Do thus perish then the works of men—thus vanish empires and nations?

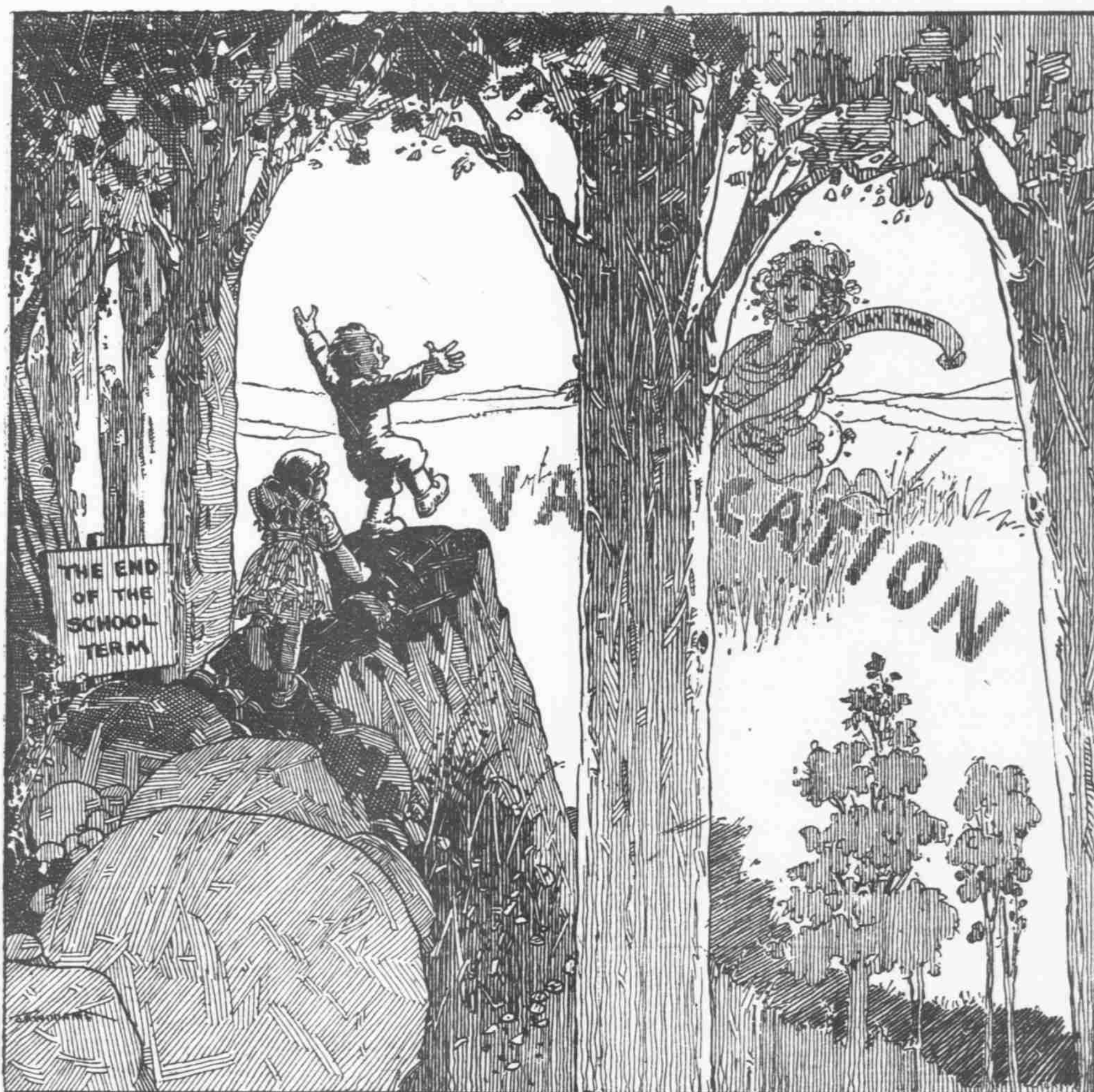
And the history of former times revived in my mind; I remembered those ancient ages when many illustrious nations inhabited these countries; I figured to myself the Assyrian on the banks of the Tigris, the Chaldean on the banks of the Euphrates, the Persian reigning from the Indus to the Mediterranean. I enumerated the kingdoms of Damascus and Idumea, of Jerusalem and Samaria, the warlike states of the Philistines, and the commercial republics of Phoenicia.

This Syria, said I, now so depopulated, then contained a hundred flourishing cities, and abounded with towns, villages, and hamlets. In all parts were seen cultivated fields, frequented roads, and crowded habitations.

Ah! whither have flown those ages of life and abundance!

(Continued in Last Column.)

## In Sight of the Promised Land



## Beatrice Fairfax Writes of the Problems and Pitfalls of the War Workers Especially for Washington Women

TODAY'S TOPIC  
"National Kitchens" and "Home Fires"

A GREAT many women have written to me lately about housekeeping problems. They are anxious before autumn to give up houses that have been happy homes to them for many years on account of the impossibility of getting reliable help. What we need in Washington to combat the threatened abandonment of housekeeping in favor of apartment hotels and boarding houses is organized bureaus that will deal with the questions of cooking and housework on an entirely new basis. The old-fashioned servant is as extinct as the dodo, let us realize this and waste no more time in lamenting the passing of that not unmixed blessing.

Women the world over have dreamed of the day when household problems could be simplified, with domestic drudgeries obviated. This is being done in England, as far as food is concerned, by the retention of the "National Kitchens," established supposedly for the duration of the war, but now announced to continue indefinitely. The "National Kitchens" were founded when all the able-bodied women in England were engaged in war work and John Bull had to undertake to keep the pot boiling in the interests of his absentee housewives. And to enable people to keep body and soul together in spite of the war profiteering restaurant.

John Bull a Thrifty Housekeeper. Having succeeded so well in community cooking, he has now decided to convert that war-time experiment into a definite peace-time activity.

A member of Lord Rhonda's food ministry has been appointed director of national kitchens with a staff of food experts to keep the enterprise at "top notch." France, who has watched the English experiment with interest, has announced her intention of inaugurating a similar public service shortly.

As an instance of how well John Bull has succeeded in his national catering scheme, I will give a menu published by a London correspondent who dined at one of the municipal restaurants an evening or two ago. This particular restaurant is in the Black Friars district, one of the most populous sections of London, lying between Fleet street and the houses of parliament. About 4,000 people are fed here daily.

The dinner cost one shilling half-penny, or, in American money, twenty-six cents, and it consisted of oxtail soup, roast beef, baked potatoes, lettuce salad, tapioca pudding, and coffee.

Not bad for twenty-six cents. It recalls the legends told by old Washingtonians of a restaurant on

F street, between Ninth and Tenth streets, where one Evans—may have been his reward—sold an excellent four-course dinner for a quarter.

Food Profiteers Say "Anarchy." Of course the English restaurant keepers and food sellers are wild and shriek "Anarchy!" because despite the mandate that the municipal restaurants must show a profit, the national kitchens not only show a profit, but are packed as well.

England seems to be "muddling" along with her food question just as successfully as she "muddled" along with the war, and with a refreshing absence of superfluous talk and gesture to be coming out on top. Instead of making rather a pitiful business of imitating what we call the "English accent" and the English brusquerie of manner, why don't we imitate the English common sense and get down to brass tacks about our food problem?

France publishes the exact cost of every food product at the present time, and we betide the profiteer who, taking on a 50 per cent profit, talks eloquently of the "cost of labor," transportation, etc.

New York, on a smaller scale, succeeded very well with municipal catering. But the prices, moderate though they are, are way beyond the reach of the hundred-

dollar-a-month class. And in spite of our "princely" residences, and the degree to which the National Capital attracts spectacular fortunes, exotic food shops, and expensive restaurants, the Government clerk has succeeded in branding Washington, in the eyes of the rest of the country, as a hundred-dollar-a-month city.

Great Britain's Way. Great Britain, however, with a sweep of the hand, undertakes to feed both this class and the class that lives on half that amount. She has 300 national kitchens and restaurants, and these, with their various branches and subdivisions, are made to fit the needs of all sorts and conditions of her citizens.

The Blackfriars' Restaurant, with its 26-cent dinner and a clientele that embraces officers, well-to-do families who have definitely given up the "servant problem," and are only to glad to fall back on municipal restaurants, is very different from the kitchens that are in White Chapel, for instance, the heart of "London's slumdom."

The wives of the slum districts carry away the excellent food in pails and containers, cooked and appetizing. It costs them less than the raw materials, not to mention the cost of coal. A glance at their faces shows their contentment, and for the first time in

their lives these women begin to look human and happy.

The war has given to Washington women much valuable experience in the way of organization. Before this most useful gift has become rusty and the various war units have become scattered, how public spirited and praiseworthy it would be if they would turn their attention to the establishment of municipal kitchens, even as the women of other cities have done.

I know that an attempt in this direction has been made, but it is too elaborate to be within the reach of the war worker and the Government clerk. What we want is something on the line that John Bull has put through so successfully, clean, wholesome, food within the reach of the humble pocketbook.

### Salary and Romance.

DEAR MISS FAIRFAX: I have been engaged for five years and the high cost of living has kept us from marrying. My fiancé's income is small and I have never been very good at managing domestic affairs. And we are literally afraid to take the step. I know you often advise girls to keep on working after they marry, but my intended is a Southern man and he cannot bear to think of me in office and his wife. Would you advise me to break my engagement or what do you think it would be well for us to do?

DISCOURAGED CICELY.

I don't wonder that you are discouraged Cicely, because you appear to lack the two essential qualities that make for success, courage and thrift. One has got to take some chances in life, not sit down and expect blessings to float right up to one's rocking chair. What were you doing all those five years that you did not learn to manage domestic affairs thriftily?

Excellent work is being done all over Washington in domestic science classes. The last of these I investigated was held in the Wilson Normal School. The canning season has set in with its usual severity and one simply can't escape learning how to do things, and what a pleasure it is, and how profitable, too.

As far as working after your marriage is concerned, I must confess to having little patience with this form of snobbery. Of course, every woman would like to be perfectly beautiful, young, and at the head of a prosperous establishment. But when the fairies neglect to leave these gifts at our cradles, we compromise. Any wholesome minded young woman is willing to help her husband for a few years and after they have saved a joint nest egg to retire and bring up her family.

## Direct Methods vs. the Rules of Evidence

By EARL GODWIN.

Rules of evidence ought not to keep the Board of Education from administering the affairs of the public schools to the best possible advantage of the school children. The Board of Education should find out ALL about everything without regard to legal procedure, without regard to precedent, and especially without regard to the toes of anyone on whom the investigators might tread.

Rules of evidence might shut out of the investigation the very thing that is keeping the schools from being of much use at present. There is ferment and upset, extending all through the school system. The education of school children suffers tremendously at every storm. It is something like a tree. Strike a blow on the trunk or on one of the main limbs and the tremor extends all the way out to the tip end of each leaf. When there is a ruction in the schools the teachers lose their efficiency as instructors because their minds are diverted from their work, and consequently the children do not learn as much as they should.

When the Board of Education knows that there is something wrong, or that a large number of parents claim there is something wrong, there should be instituted at once some kind of an inquiry. The board is an administrative body, not a judicial one, and, therefore, it should proceed as a business organization, not as a court. It should get at the facts, and all lawyers know that it is possible to conceal some of the facts sometimes by adroit use of the rules of evidence.

But the board, not being bound by rules of evidence, can start with second-hand information, hearsay, or suspicion, and would be justified in digging into a situation by any means. It is NOT justified in hiding behind rules of evidence.

The schools are to be administered for the benefit of the school children, not for the benefit of pride, prejudice, or precedent from any source. The aim of our entire school system is the benefit, the education, the progress of the CHILD. If we suspect there is a wrong condition in his school, we should get at it in a hurry, not wait to refresh our memories on the precedents in the case.

## HEARD AND SEEN

"Why are names such as Obishkosh, and is now in Washington as typical Wabash, Iowa, as the Iowa-ways call it? When the song 'On the Banks of the Wabash' had its vogue, I remember hearing a highly cultivated professor of English literature cry in pain, 'Wabash! Wabash! My God—Wabash!'"

"Why is the Middle West, anyway?"

"WASHINGTONIAN."

Why, indeed? When we have such wonderful names to choose from in the East: Skowhegan, Hoboken, Anacostia, Bull Run, Snickers Gap, and right in our own fair Washington, Tom Cat Flats, Bear Cat Alley.

Are There Oysters in Indiana?

Honest doubt may exist as to whether oysters grow in Indiana, but it is being fully demonstrated that Indians are not clams—especially those who are revealing themselves in Washington. They write as brilliantly on the subject of oysters as they do on the League of Nations.

This oyster discussion has brought to light several Hoosiers who find peace and plenty in this fair city. When may we expect to hear from—HORACE DE HART, that disciple of the old school gentlemen, who has been in the Interior Department for so many years?

JOHN F. HAYES, director of the political destinies of Senator Jim Watson?

CHARLEY HART, correspondent and ex-candidate for Congress?

JIM HORNADAY, whom to know is to love?

HARRY HUNT, who spent his boyhood days fishing with most Indians who have become great?

CARL RIDDICK, who went to Montana six years ago from Indiana?

My sister had an apartment in the Birmingham. About a month ago this apartment was visited by a big fire. Every one there lost heavily. The renovation of the building started as soon as insurance adjustments were made. My sister called on the agents to make arrangements to go into her apartment again. She was informed that her rent would be from now on seventy-five dollars, instead of forty dollars, which she had been paying for about five years, an increase of thirty-five dollars, or nearly double.

FRANK SIGOURNEY.

Sarah Pool suggests that inasmuch as July 4 falls on Friday that the departments be closed all day Saturday, July 5, and that the clerks make up the time by working all of the Saturday following.

The Cuthbert Bible Class Club, of Peck Chapel, has on hand over \$1,200 toward giving the wounded soldiers of Walter Reed Hospital an outing this summer, beginning July 1 at Colonial Beach at their cottage.

This class had about fifty odd wounded last summer and showed them a fine time.

The class gave one supper and one entertainment for the full purpose of this outing with the assistance of hard work on the part of Herman Meyers, president of the club.

The class expects to have a large number of boys this summer, each member of the club to be in charge of the boys two weeks at a time.

E. R. C.

## HERE IS "FINE WRITING"

(Continued From First Column.)

ance?—whither vanished those brilliant creations of human industry? Where are those ramparts of Nineveh, those walls of Babylon, those palaces of Persepolis, those temples of Balbec and of Jerusalem? Where are those fleets of Tyre, those dock yards of Arad, those workshops of Sidon, and that multitude of sailors, of pilots, of merchants, and of soldiers? Where those husbandmen, harvests, flocks, and all the creation of living beings in which the face of the earth rejoiced?

Thus absorbed in meditation, a crowd of new reflections continually poured in upon my mind. Everything, continued I, bewilders my judgment, and fills my heart with trouble and uncertainty. When these countries enjoyed what constitutes the glory and happiness of man, they were inhabited by infidel nations: It was the Phoenician, offering human sacrifices to Moloch, who gathered into his stores the riches of all climates; it was the Chaldean, prostrate before his serpent-god, who subjugated opulent cities, laid waste the palaces of kings, and despoiled the temples of the gods; it was the Persians, worshipers of fire, who received the tribute of a hundred nations; they were the inhabitants of this very city, adorers of the sun and stars, who erected so many monuments of prosperity and luxury.

And yet, are not these the children of the prophets? The Mussulman, Christian, Jew, are they not elect children of God, loaded with favors and miracles? Why, then, do these privileged races no longer enjoy the same advantages? Why are these fields, sanctified by the blood of martyrs, deprived of their ancient fertility? Why have those blessings been banished hence and transferred for so many ages to other nations and different climates?